

REMARKS

Response to Arguments:

In response to the Amendment filed on May 19, 2007, the Office has rejected claims 8 and 14, stating that:

Applicant suggests that these ports do not correspond, but fails in any way to explain what distinguished the two ports ... As the I/O ports of the reference and the management ports of the claimed invention perform the same functions and are therefore found to be equivalent and indistinguishable. Applicants citation of a definition from PC Mag website is neither dated to the time of invention nor applicable when the term is defined in the specification. The definition from the specification will be used and the rejection is maintained.

Applicants respectfully disagree. As evidenced by the Declaration under C.F.R. §1.132, filed herewith, the term "management port" had been widely used, prior to the conception of the present invention in the industry, as a socket in a network device that is used for remotely managing a device coupled thereto. A conventional management port of a device is isolated from the functionality of the other ports, such as I/O ports of normal operation, of the device. For instance, the process of managing a device, as described in the Declaration, typically includes interacting with the operating system or the main control program of the device for inputting commands that allows to get information about events, registries or configurations in the device, and/or inputting commands for configuring, saving or executing actions in the device.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-6 and 15-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Belkin 4X4 USB Peripheral Switch User Manual FiU400 (Belkin).

In rejecting claim 1, the Office has stated that "Belkin teaches instructing the concentrator device to select at least [one] of the active device to manage (switching by selection of device to manage, page 16), establishing a link between the communication port (computer ports, page 4) of the concentrator device (peripheral switch, page 4) and the management port (USB device ports, page 4) of the concentrator device associated with the at least of [sic] selected active device...." Applicants respectfully disagree.

The Belkin 4X4 peripheral switch, which appears to be viewed by the Office to correspond to the concentrator device of the presently claimed invention, has four USB type A receptacles for connecting up to four USB devices, four USB type B receptacles for connecting up to four computers, and four switches that respectively correspond to the four USB devices and allow a user to connect the four USB devices to the four computers. Each of the four switches merely connects a USB port to another USB port, i.e., the four ports of the 4X4 peripheral switch are typical input/output ports of normal operation and different from the management ports for managing the peripheral devices. To the reading of the undersigned, Belkin does not teach or suggest that the devices to be connected to the 4X4 peripheral switch include management ports, much less that the 4X4 peripheral switch includes management ports.

It is apparent that the applied art does not appreciate the problem of the prior art identified in the present application nor does it suggest that the Belkin 4X4 peripheral switch provides a solution to any problem. As such, Belkin fails to teach or suggest a concentrator device having multiple management ports, much less the method steps of claim 1. Likewise, Belkin fails to teach or suggest the concentrator

device recited in claim 15. As the cited reference does not disclose or suggest every feature of claims 1 and 15 as required by 35 U.S.C. §102, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 15 is respectfully requested. Claims 2-6 and 16-18 depend from allowable independent claims 1 and 15, respectively, rendering them also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 8-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by DiGiorgio et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,286,060).

In rejecting claims 8-14, the Office has stated that “DiGiorgio teaches ... a switch for selectively connecting the at least one communication port to a selected one of the plurality of management ports (column 7, lines 37-51, Fig. 8, element 804 by way of controller)....” Applicants respectfully disagree. The DiGiorgio patent discloses an expansion unit for connecting multiple I/O ports to a hosting computing device. As depicted in Fig. 4 of the DiGiorgio patent, the hosting device includes a host I/O port coupled to the multiple I/O ports served by the port interface modules of the expansion unit. Each device coupled to the expansion unit, which appears to be viewed by the Office to correspond to the active device, includes an I/O port, not a management port for managing the device. As such, the DiGiorgio patent fails to teach or suggest “a plurality of management ports that are each configured to be connected to a management port of a respective one of the active devices” as recited in claim 8 and “a concentrator device comprising at least one communication port, a microprocessor, and a plurality of management ports wherein each of the management ports is configured to be connected to a respective one of the active devices” as recited in claim 14. As the cited reference fails to teach or suggest every

feature of claims 8 and 14, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 8 and 14 are not anticipated by the cited reference, and claims 8 and 14 are patentable. Claims 9-13 depend from claim 8, rendering them also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Belkin's 4X4 Peripheral Switch User Manual FiU400 (Belkin) in further view of U.S. Patent No. 7,039,731 to Hasegawa.

This rejection is predicated on the above characterization of the Belkin, and is respectfully traversed, for the reasons pointed out above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 7 lacks foundation and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this response, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

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By: /CSPark/
Chung S. Park
Registration No. 52,093

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
650 622 2300